

# Environmental Fact Sheet

NAVAL WEAPONS STATION CONCORD

U.S. Department of the Navy, Engineering Field Activity West • May 1995

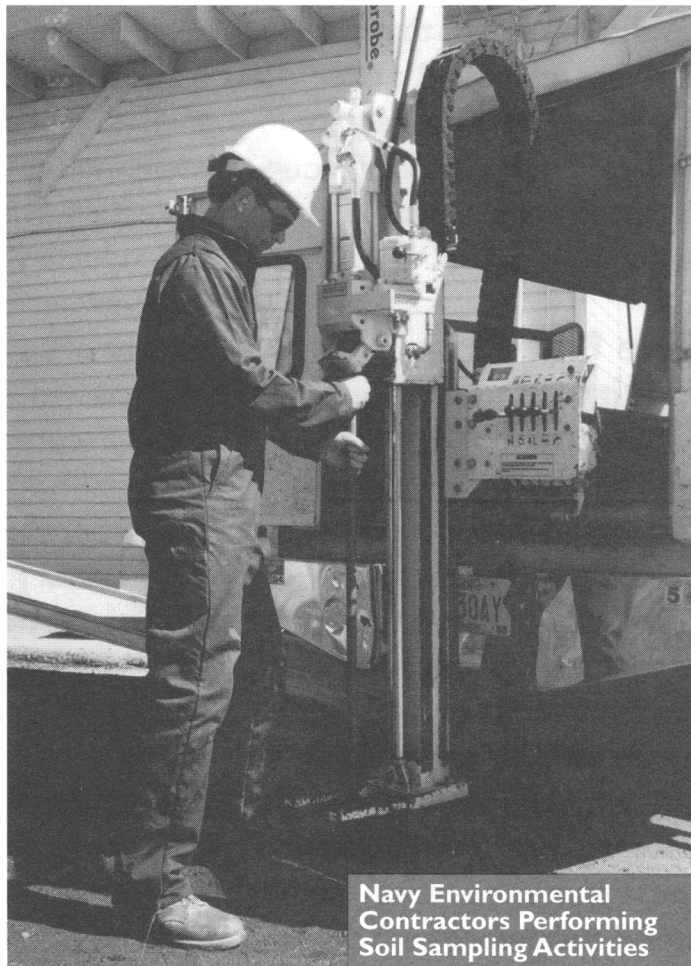
## Introduction

*This fact sheet is the first in a series that will be produced by Naval Weapons Station Concord to inform the public about environmental investigations and subsequent cleanup underway at the facility. This fact sheet contains information about environmental activities and upcoming public involvement related to the site environmental cleanup.*

## Site Background

Naval Weapons Station Concord encompasses nearly 13,000 acres and is located in north central Contra Costa County, about 30 miles northeast of San Francisco, California. Suisun Bay lies immediately to the north of the Naval Weapons Station, the city of Concord surrounds it to the west and south, and the cities of Bay Point and Pittsburg are to the east (see map on page 3). Naval Weapons Station Concord is the major naval munitions facility on the west coast, and has operated as a shipping port for ammunition and weapons since 1942.

An environmental cleanup effort is underway to identify and eliminate or minimize environmental contamination that may have re-



sulted from past operations at Naval Weapons Station Concord. The environmental cleanup effort is carried out under the Department of Defense's Installation Restoration Program.

The Installation Restoration Program environmental cleanup team includes representatives from the Navy, U.S. the Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), the California

Environmental Protection Agency's Department of Toxic Substances Control, and other federal and state agencies.

In December 1994, the Naval Weapons Station was placed on the U.S. EPA National Priorities List. The National Priorities List is an inventory of sites that the U.S. EPA has identified under the Superfund law that require investigation and possibly long-term environmental cleanup action.

## The Navy's Environmental Cleanup Program

The Navy's environmental cleanup program, known as the Installation Restoration Program, was initiated to identify and clean up environmental contamination caused by past waste handling practices. These practices occurred before the potentially hazardous nature of these wastes were fully understood and before environmental regulations for their disposal were established.

The Installation Restoration Program follows a step-by-step approach (see chart on page 4). The first step is called a preliminary assessment/site inspection. During the **preliminary assessment**,

the information on use, storage, and spills of known or suspected hazardous substances is gathered largely from historical records and interviews with facility personnel. The Navy uses this information to determine if a particular area or site requires further study to confirm the release of contaminants to the environment.

If the preliminary assessment indicates further study is necessary, a **site inspection** is conducted. A site inspection involves verifying a suspected release of contaminants to the environment by physical sampling. If contaminant releases are confirmed, a remedial investigation/feasibility study may be necessary.

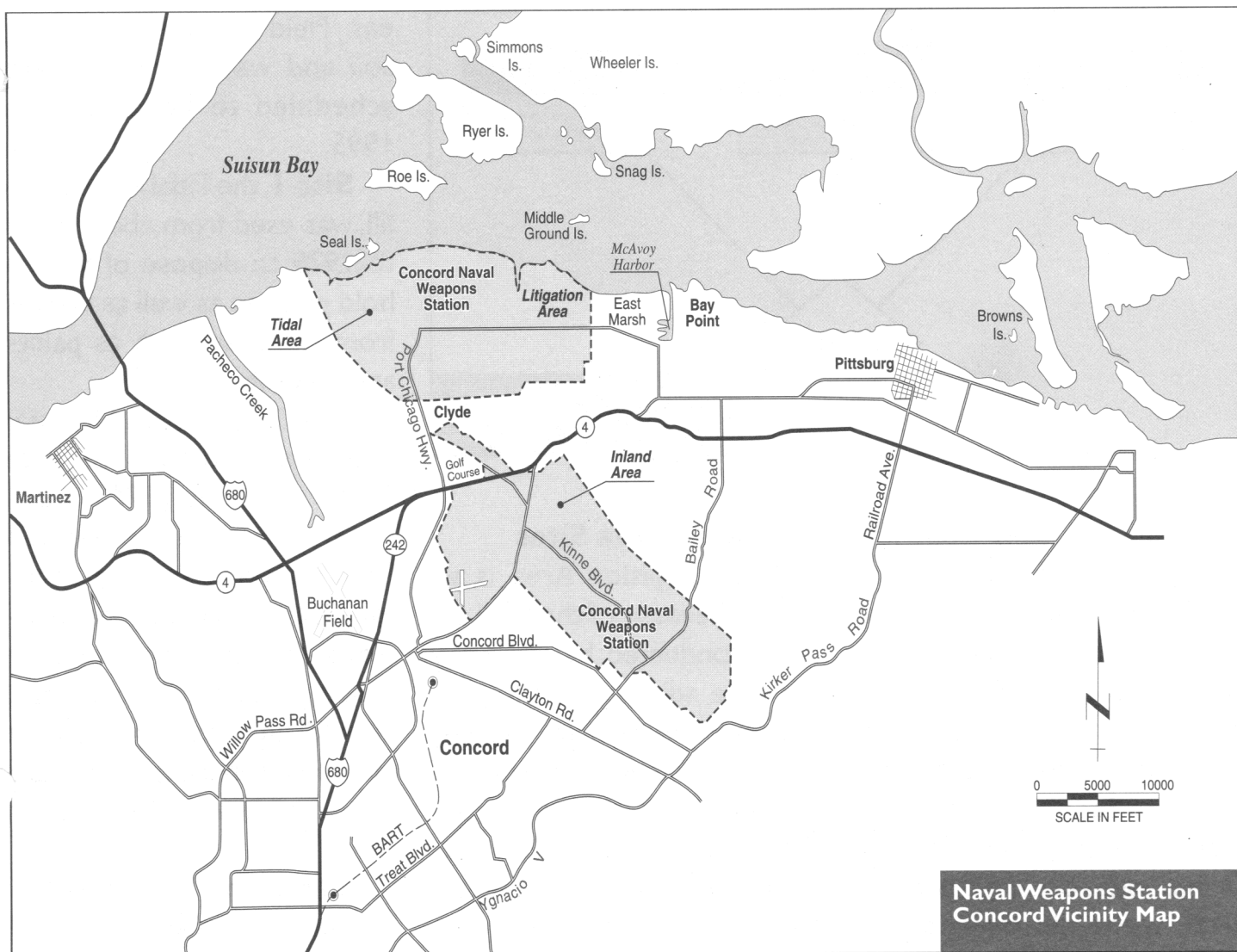
The **remedial investigation** is a full investigation of a site to determine the nature and extent of contamination. During the remedial investigation stage, groundwater, surface water, soil, and biological samples are collected and analyzed, as needed, to determine the types of contaminants, and how far they may have spread.

A **feasibility study** is conducted concurrently with the remedial investigation to evaluate possible cleanup alternatives. Each alternative is evaluated for effectiveness,

cost, technical feasibility, and protection of human health and the environment. Once the remedial investigation/feasibility study is completed, a proposed plan for cleanup is produced. During the public comment period, public meetings may be held to address significant community concerns. Public input is solicited throughout the entire remedial investigation/feasibility study process and especially at milestones such as the proposed plan.

The next step involves preparing a final **remedial action plan** and a **record of decision**. These documents provide the reasoning behind the selection of a particular cleanup alternative. After the remedial action plan and record of decision have been formally reviewed, approved, and signed by the regulatory agencies, the remedial design/remedial action begins.

During the **remedial design**, the specific construction documents are prepared for the selected cleanup alternative. The **remedial action** is the final step of the Installation Restoration Program where the cleanup action is performed and appropriate monitoring of a site occurs.



**Naval Weapons Station  
Concord Vicinity Map**

## Environmental Cleanup Activities at Naval Weapons Station Concord

Naval Weapons Station Concord is divided into two geographical areas called the Tidal Area and the Inland Area.

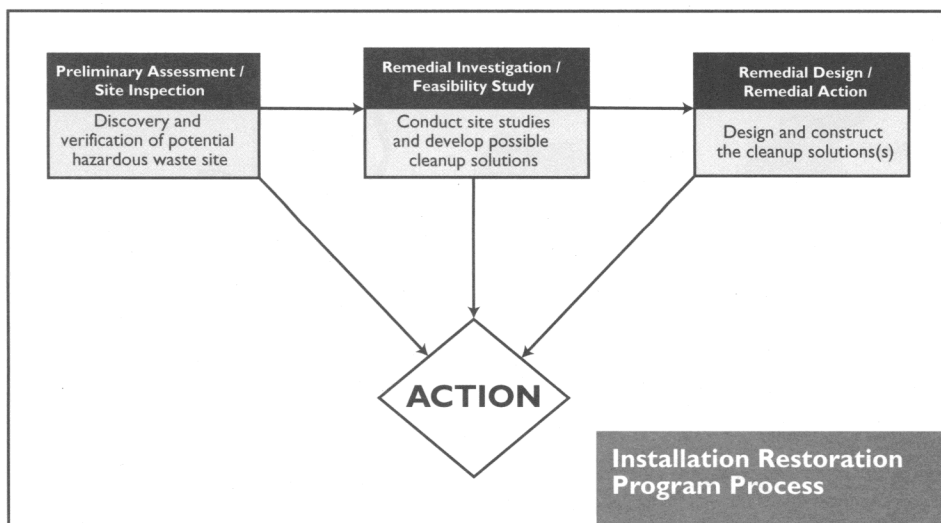
The Tidal Area includes about 6,077 acres of mainland and 1,571 acres of land on six islands in Suisun Bay. The Tidal Area is used for receiving, inspecting, and storing munitions

transported to and from off-site locations.

The Inland Area, encompassing about 5,200 acres, contains various facilities for munitions storage, munitions inspection and maintenance, administration, public works, supply, and housing.

Although current waste handling practices are carried out in full compliance with federal and state laws, past practices may have caused the

release of contaminants in some areas within the Naval Weapons Station. Operations in the Tidal Area and Inland Area that may have caused environmental contamination include the disposal of paints and solvents; the disposal of chemically-treated wood; the disposal of miscellaneous household and industrial debris; the operation of a small arms firing range; the open burning of various munitions;



and spills or leaks from fuel storage tanks.

The environmental cleanup effort at Naval Weapons Station Concord has four groups of sites: Litigation Area Sites, Tidal Area Sites, Inland Area Sites, and Solid Waste Management Unit Sites. The grouping of these sites occurred because sites were discovered and evaluated for further action at different times and under different regulatory programs. The Litigation Area Sites and the Tidal Area Sites contain parcels of land located in the Tidal Area of the Naval Weapons Station. The Inland Area Sites contain parcels of land located only in the inland portion of the Naval Weapons Station. The Solid Waste Management Unit Sites are found in both Inland and Tidal Areas.

### Litigation Area Sites

The Litigation Area is so named because of the legal actions conducted by the Navy with the adjacent and former property owners to recover cleanup costs for a portion of the area. The Litigation Area is divided into four subsites that are contaminated with metals. Remedial actions, including removing contaminated soils and revegetating, will be completed by the end of 1995. As part of the monitoring of the remedial action, an ecological risk assessment is being performed to evaluate the condition of the sites.

### Tidal Area Sites

Four Tidal Area Sites (Sites 1, 2, 9, and 11) are currently undergoing a remedial investigation. These sites are located in or adjacent to wetland ar-

reas. Field activities, including soil and water sampling, are scheduled to begin in June 1995.

**Site 1**, the Tidal Area Landfill, was used from about 1944 to 1979 to dispose of household garbage as well as wastes from the base, such as paints and solvents.

**Site 2**, the R Area Disposal Site, was used from the late 1940s to about 1976 to dispose of materials generated from painting, stenciling, renovating, and packaging of munitions in the surrounding buildings. Ammunition casings, cans, drums, and other inert ordnance-related materials are visible on the surface of this site.

**Site 9**, the Froid and Taylor Roads Site, is an area of land bordered by Froid and Taylor Roads where a piece of expended ordnance was found on the surface. In addition, scrap metals and other debris were found in the surrounding area.

**Site 11**, the Wood Hogger Site, is where wood scrap from Naval Weapons Station operations was chipped by a wood hogging (shredding) operation between 1967 and 1973. Wood chips were deposited on the ground next to the hogger. Some of the wood may have



been treated with wood preservatives.

These four Tidal Area Sites are currently undergoing a remedial investigation. Based on contaminants associated with earlier studies at the site, chemicals that have been targeted for study include paints, solvents, wood preservatives, petroleum products, and metals.

### Inland Area Sites

Five Inland Area Sites (Sites 13, 17, 22, 24A, and 27) are currently undergoing a remedial investigation. Field activities, including soil and water sampling, began in April 1995.

**Site 13**, the Burn Area, was used from the late 1940s until about 1974 for burning ordnance. Ordnance was burned in gullies and pits at this site. Studies have identified ordnance-related metal fragments such as flares, and petroleum products, including diesel, in surface soils at the site.

**Site 17** consists of Building IA-24 and two adjacent storage sheds where battery acid was reportedly drained from forklift batteries into surrounding soil prior to 1974. Underground storage tanks containing diesel are also located at the site. Studies have identified petroleum

products, including diesel and gasoline, in the soil.

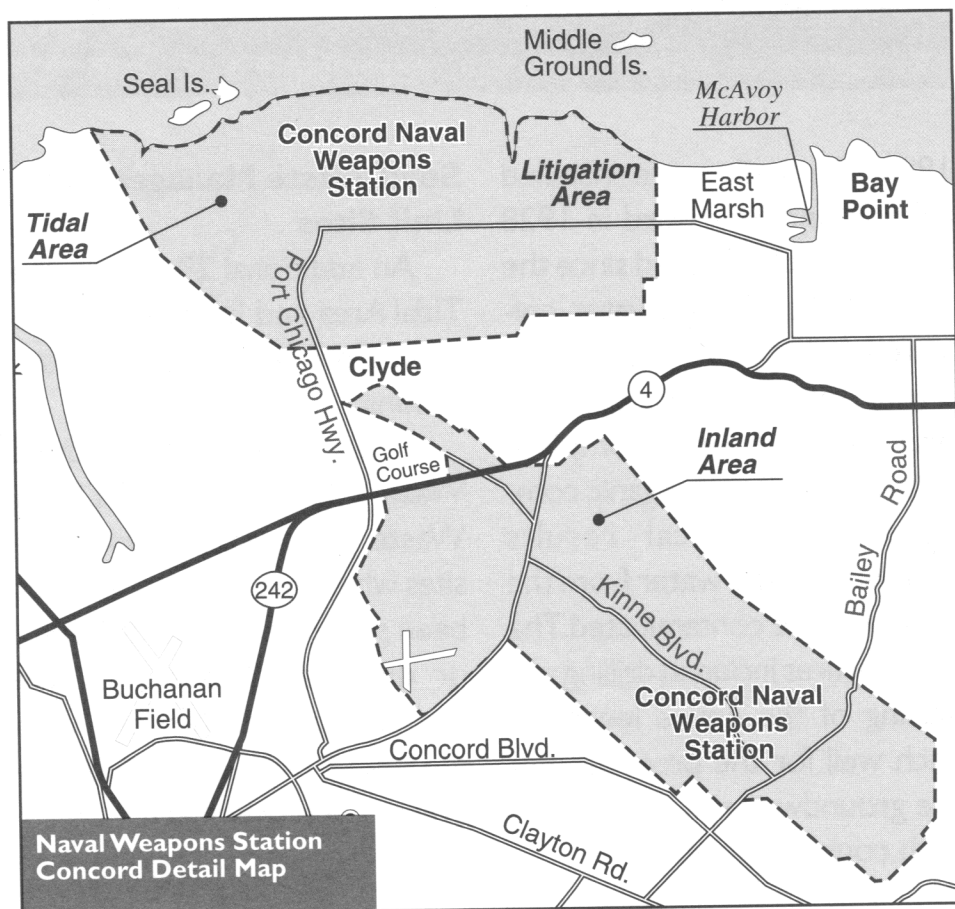
**Site 22**, Building 7SH5, was formerly used to clean and paint missile wings and fins. Cleaning solvents, paint thinners, and paints were used in the painting operations. Wastes generated at this site were reportedly disposed of in a pit or into a drainage ditch near the building. An underground storage tank containing diesel is also located next to the building. Studies have identified petroleum products, including diesel, in soil at the site.

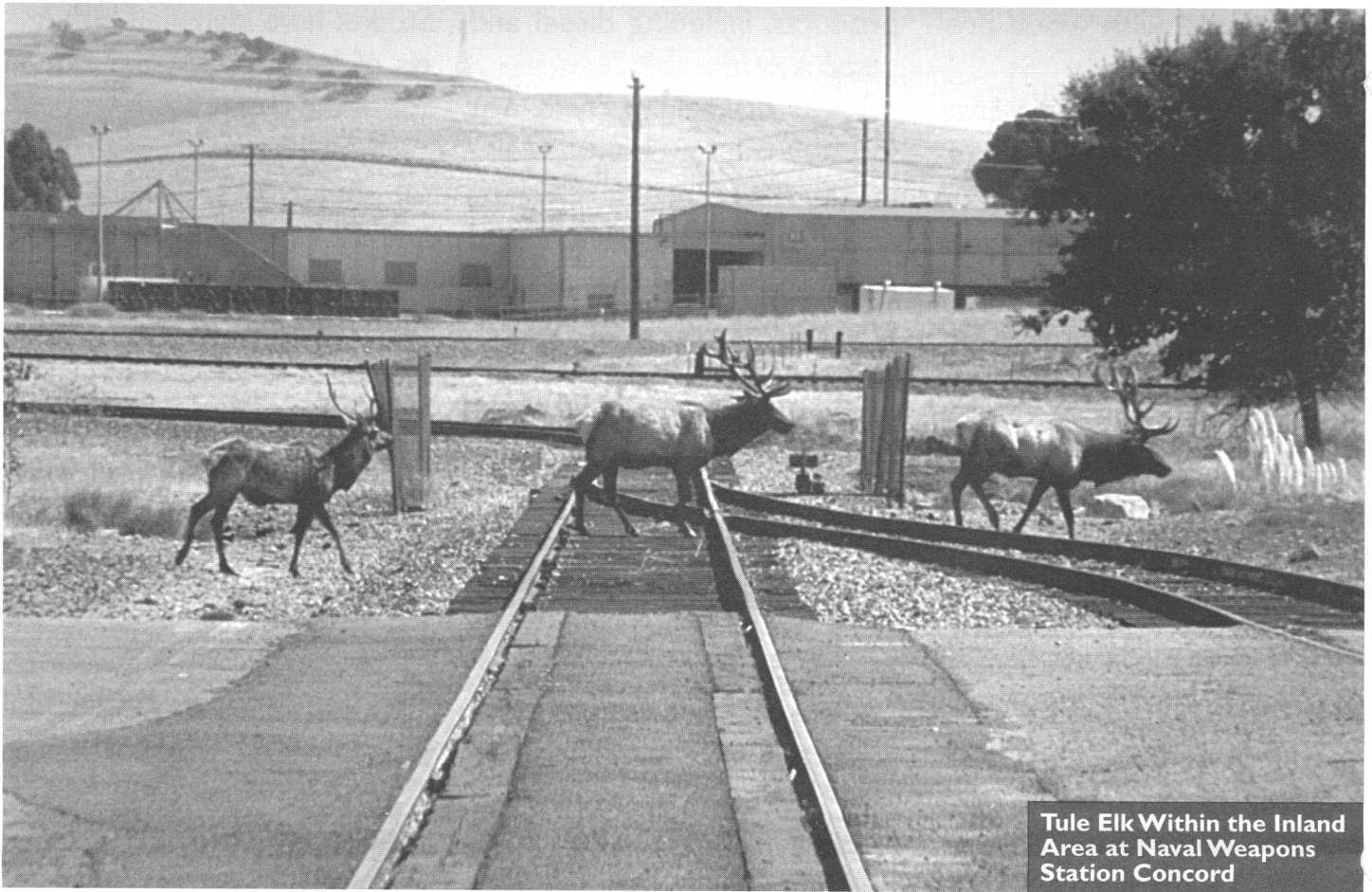
**Site 24A** has been an active pistol range for over 30 years.

Studies have identified high levels of lead, copper, and zinc in soil in the target berm.

**Site 27** consists of a chemical laboratory at Building IA-20 and an underground storage tank containing diesel. The laboratory is used to test oils and hydraulic fluids. Studies have identified pesticides and petroleum products, including diesel and gasoline, in soil. The pesticides may be due to pesticide application in the area around the building.

In addition, three former facility supply water wells in the Inland Area were closed in April





1995. The wells were installed along Kinne Boulevard in 1928 and had not been used since the early 1960s. Groundwater collected from each of the wells during previous investigations was analyzed for a complete suite of metals and organic compounds. Analytical results showed that the water from the wells was not contaminated. The well closures included drilling and sealing of the entire length of each well for the protection of the groundwater in accordance with county regulations.

### **Solid Waste Management Unit Sites**

An additional 29 sites in the Tidal Area and Inland Area have been identified for site investigations.

These sites are called Solid Waste Management Units. Solid Waste Management Units are sites where hazardous waste has been generated, treated, stored, or disposed. These sites are cleaned up in accordance with the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

Many of these sites are buildings where chemicals may have been disposed of into sinks that drain into septic tanks. Other sites include repair and painting facilities and a pesticide mixing area. The site investigations are being conducted to determine whether past activities at the sites have resulted in chemicals being discharged to the environment. Investigations at these sites are currently being conducted and will be completed in mid-1995.

## The Community Relations Program

Community involvement is an important part of Naval Weapons Station Concord's environmental cleanup program. Community involvement is achieved through the implementation of the Community Relations Plan. The objectives of the Community Relations Plan include maintaining open two-way communication between the Navy and the community by providing the community with information about environmental investigation and cleanup activities and addressing the community's concerns. The Navy has been working with local residents since the 1980s to ensure this objective is fulfilled.

Key steps that the Navy takes to facilitate community involvement include the following:

- Conducting community interviews to identify community concerns regarding the cleanup effort. These interviews are discussed in the Community Relations Plan.
- Preparing the Community Relations Plan, which contains a schedule of planned and recommended community activities including public meetings, fact sheets such as this environmental fact sheet, public notices on key activities, a mailing list of interested citizens, site tours, and workshops. The Community Relations Plan also lists various contact persons to provide information to the community. The Community Relations Plan is currently being updated.
- Establishing a Restoration Advisory Board to provide a forum for community involvement. The Restoration Advisory Board consists of regulatory agency representatives, Navy officials, and local citizens interested in the environmental cleanup process. A separate fact sheet explaining the Restoration Advisory Board process is enclosed.
- Creating an information repository that includes a permanent file of documents regarding the environmental cleanup at Naval Weapons Station Concord. The information repository includes the administrative record, which contains all the documents used in making decisions concerning cleanup at the Naval Weapons Station. The information repository is available to the public and is located at the main branch of the Contra Costa County public library in Pleasant Hill. The address and telephone number for the library are:

**Contra Costa County Library  
Main Branch  
1750 Oak Park Blvd.  
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523  
(510) 646-6434**



Send this form to:  
Mr. Richard Pieper  
Code 092, Building IA-15  
Naval Weapons Station Concord  
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Concord, CA 94520-5100

PHONE:

ADDRESS:

NAME:

### MAILING LIST

For more information on the Navy's environmental cleanup program at Naval Weapons Station Concord, complete the mailing list form below. You may also contact either Ms. Anna Lou Procter or Ms. Linda Zukeran at the Public Affairs Office, Naval Weapons Station Concord at (510) 246-5591.

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